

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action dated March 27, 2007 has been carefully considered. Claims 1-12 and 21 remain pending with claim 1 being in independent form. A copy of the claims in their present form is included herewith for the convenience of the Examiner.

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 2,657,926 to Price et al. (hereinafter "Price") in view of U.S. Patent 5,079,980 to Oakes. In addition, dependent claims 2-12 are rejected as being unpatentable over Price in view of Oakes in combination with several other secondary references. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections.

As was noted in Applicants' previous response dated December 20, 2006, claim 1 is explicitly directed to a combination of a linear feeding device for the film, a trimming device, and a film holder. As to the film holder, the claim recites that it is:

...operable between a first position wherein a gap is provided for the film to pass through during feeding to the trimming device, and a second position wherein the gap is closed so that the film is clamped by the film holder along a lone extending transversely of the film feed direction and along with the film is severed by the trimming device

This feature is not found in Price or Oakes. As was mentioned in Applicants' previous response, the element in Price most closely corresponding to the claimed film holder is finger 70. The finger 70 obviously provides only support at a single point, and there is no other disclosure, teaching or suggestion in Price to provide clamping *along the length* of a transverse line on which it is being cut. In fact, as can be seen in Fig. 1 of Price, the finger 70 is downstream of knife 52, and it is clear that the film is not even clamped *at* the cutting line, much less, along its length.

In response to this argument, the Examiner contends that the film holder 70 of Price extends transversely along the length of a transverse line and clamps the film 17 along a transverse line which the trimming device trims the film. The Examiner refers to Figs. 1-3 and Column 3, lines 14-73 of Price. Applicants have carefully reviewed the Price reference, and in particular, the portion identified by the Examiner and respectfully submit that the Examiner is mistaken.

As was noted in Applicants' previous response, the finger 70 is downstream of the knife 52. Further, as is clearly illustrated in Fig. 1, for example, in Price, the finger 70 is spaced apart from the knife 52. Thus, the finger 70 clearly does not clamp the film 17 at the cutting line, much less, along its length.

Further, in response to Applicants previous argument that the finger 70 only supports the film at a single point, the Examiner quotes the language at Column 3, lines 36-45 of Price as allegedly contradicting this argument. Applicants again must respectfully disagree.

As is noted above, the finger 70 supports the film 17 at a single point. The portion of the Price reference quoted by the Examiner describes how the finger 70 is lowered onto the top of the film 17 to hold the film against the table. There is no disclosure, teaching or suggestion in Price, however, to provide clamping *along the length of* a transverse line on which it is being cut, or severed. Indeed, the use of the term finger in the Price reference would tend to suggest that the finger 70 does not provide clamping *along the length of* a transverse line on which the film is cut.

The Examiner further argues that claim 1 does not require that the film holder extend along the length of the film. However, claim 1 clearly requires that "the film is clamped by the film holder along a line extending transversely of the film feed direction and along which the film is severed by the trimming device." Thus, the line along which the film is clamped is also the line along which the film is severed, which runs the length of the film to ensure that the film is severed.

The Examiner also argues that claim 1 does not require that the film be clamped "at the cutting line." This is clearly incorrect. As noted above, claim 1 requires that "the film is clamped by the film holder along a line extending transversely of the film feed direction and along which the film is severed by the trimming device." That is, the film is clamped by the film holder on a line along which the film is severed, or cut. As is noted above, Price fails to disclose this feature since the finger 70 of Price is separated from the knife 52 such that the clamping point of the finger 70 cannot be on the line along which the film is cut by the knife 52.

Similarly, with regard to Oakes, as can be seen in Fig. 4, for example, the spacer bar 130 is separated from the cutter blades 122 and 164. Thus, the film cannot be clamped by the bar 130 at the cutting line of the blades 122 and 164.

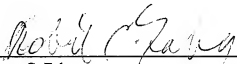
From the foregoing, it may readily be seen that even if teachings are extracted from the two principal references, and combined, none of these remedy the failure of each of them to disclose, teach, or suggest clamping the film along the length of the cutting line. Accordingly, all of the rejections of claim 1 are invalid, and the claim should be allowed. Claim 21 should also be allowed for the same reasons.

Claim 2-12 are directly or indirectly dependent on allowable claim 1, and are therefore also allowable for the reasons stated above. In addition, these claims recite features which, in combination with the features of their respective parent claims are neither taught nor suggested in Price, Oakes or in any of the other secondary references.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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